*613 159 581 156 with Bait Bu Taram of 'Ailit Lazumi. These marriages and their resultant alliances enhance the political power and social status of Hajj 'Ali within and without al-Qasr.

Although he has no education himself, and neither reads 159 156 nor writes, Hajj 'Ali has sent his son to the University of • 873 [212] Alexandria. Hajj 'Ali's son is the only boy from al-Qasr ever to attend the university. Hajj 'Ali desired that his son study law at the university or enter the military academy "and become an officer." But his son objected to this, saying: "Either way I will be employed by the government and will not be permitted to travel and see other countries." Hajj 'Ali did not argue with this: he said that his son should study what he wished. The son is now studying in the Faculty of Commerce 156 159 872 562 at Alexandria. Hajj 'Ali is also sending his daughters to the primary school in al-Qasr. Not all of the Bedouins believe that girls should receive an education.

156 159 554 472 Hajj 'Ali places among the "status group" in terms of wealth. Although he has now committed himself to olive-farming as a way of life, he remains one of the biggest sheep owners in al-Qasr. Therefore, he is identified with both traditional and modern symbols of status. Hajj 'Ali differs in 156 159 554 443 423 472 one important way from other members of the "status group" in that he owns three small general stores, two in al-Qasr and one far to the west in Sallum. This fact has several significant implications. Shops in al-Qasr (there are five

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that he did not choose Cyrenaica as his field of labour but was compelled to settle in Libya for a time because the road to the west was closed by the French and the road to the east by the authorities in Cairo and Mecca. The Grand Sanusi was a cosmopolitan, a townsman, and more at home in the schools and libraries of Fez, Cairo, and Mecca than amid the lentisk and juniper of the Cyrenaican plateau or the thyme and wormwood of its rolling plains. Even after founding in 1843 what has become the Mother Lodge of the Order, al-Zawiya al-Baida, on the central Cyrenaican plateau, not far from the ancient city of Cyrene, and while the Sanusi movement was still young in the country, he returned in 1846 to Mecca and stayed there till 1853. Altogether he spent only about ten years of his teaching life in Cyrenaica, whereas he spent some twenty years in the Hijaz.

On his return to Cyrenaica he seems to have felt the need for greater solitude. He was then nearing seventy years of age and doubtless felt that what was left to him of life should be given to contemplation, prayer, and study. It may be true also, as is commonly stated in books written by Europeans, that he desired to place a wide stretch of desert between himself and the Turkish authorities who, as the Sanusiya movement grew, began to take greater interest in it. He therefore first went to live for a short while at al-'Azziyyat on the southern edge of the plateau, where he built a zawiya, and afterwards at Jaghbub, about 160 km. from the sea.

Jaghbub, now to become the centre of the Order and the seat of an Islamic University second only in Africa to al-Azhar, was till 1856, when the Grand Sanusi made it his seat, an uninhabited oasis, in which the water was brackish, highly sulphurous, and insufficient to irrigate more than a small area of gardens. It was not a place for luxurious living, though it seems to have been healthy and, unlike Siwa, free from malaria; but it had certain political advantages. It was out of reach of the Turkish, French, or Egyptian governments, it was on the main pilgrimage route from North-west Africa through Egypt to Mecca, and this pilgrimage route bisected at the oasis one of the trade routes from the coast to the Sahara and the Sudan. Moreover, since Cyrenaica is a peninsula, it was the most central point he could have chosen at that time to be in equal

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

slaves, kitchens, and wells. The oasis depression was studded with date palms and just outside the main entrance to the village were small irrigated gardens and wind-mills. The people had to use the brackish water for ordinary purposes, but sufficient fresh water for tea was obtained from infrequent showers by hollowing out cisterns in the rocks at the top of the western escarpment of the oasis.

The Grand Sanusi was not only a very learned man and a writer of distinction but also a bibliophile with a fine library of some 8,000 volumes,[1] mostly works on Islamic law and jurisprudence, mysticism, philosophy, history, koranic exegesis, poetry, and astronomy and astrology. Round him were many men capable of making good use of this substantial library. Indeed, it would have been difficult to have found anywhere in the Islamic world at that time, outside Cairo, a circle of better scholars. Poetry was one of the arts most cultivated at the oasis and I have been told by Arabs that it reached a high level of excellence. Shaikh Muhammad 'Uthman, himself a poet, wrote that at Jaghbub one meets 'literary men of distinction, whose writings eclipse those of the poets of Iraq and of Andalousia'.[2]

The whole community at Jaghbub may have numbered round about 1,000, but it is not possible to make more than a guess at the figure. As the oasis produces little except dates, the supply problem must have been considerable, and we know that the Grand Sanusi kept herds of camels to the west of the oasis, where there is scrub grazing, and at al-'Azziyyat, to transport supplies from the coast. The community lived very largely on the surplus revenues, mostly goods in kind, sent annually by all the zawiyas of Cyrenaica.

The community was centred round the University. It was, in fact, almost purely a University society, and its importance as such in the history of the Sanusiya Order is very considerable. Here, under his personal supervision and the supervision of his disciples, far from worldly distractions, the Grand Sanusi was able to train the future leaders of the Order. The Shaikhs of the lodges of the Order were appointed by him from among his intimate circle of disciples, many of whom had followed him

[1] Duveyrier, op. cit., p. 24; Muhammad bin 'Uthman, op. cit., p. 88; Sir Richard Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to al-Madinah and Meccah* (Memorial Edition), 1893, vol. ii, pp. 24–5.

[2] Op. cit., p. 88.